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Selected Speeches and News Releases

April 19 - April 26, 1990

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USDA ANNOUNCES SCRAPIE NEGOTIATED RULEMAKING ADVISORY COMMITTEE MEETING DATES

WASHINGTON, April 19—The U.S. Department of Agriculture today announced the first meeting of the scrapie negotiated rulemaking advisory committee, to be held May 8-9 in Washington, D.C. The committee will develop a revised program to control scrapie in sheep and goats.

Scrapie is a disease fatal to sheep and goats, affecting their central nervous system. Currently there is no diagnostic test or treatment for the disease.

The meeting is open to the public and will be held in the offices of the Conservation Foundation, 1250 24th Street N.W., from 9 a.m. to 5 p.m. both days. An official notice of the meeting will be published in the April 19, Federal Register.

The meetings will bring together specialists from USDA's Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service, representatives of the sheep industry, and other parties interested in scrapie issues.

The advisory committee will address issues such as animal identification, flock management and record keeping, reporting cases, and responsibilities of industry and official groups. The negotiated rulemaking process uses an independent facilitator, follows guidelines established by the committee, negotiates in good faith and aims at reaching a consensus on which all parties can agree.

Public participation at the meetings will be allowed during periods announced at the meeting. Anyone wishing to file a written statement with the committee may do so either at the time of the meeting, or before the meeting, by sending the statement to Helene Wright, Chief, Regulatory Analysis and Development, PPD, APHIS, USDA, Room 866, Federal Building, 6505 Belcrest Road, Hyattsville, Md. 20782. Comments should reference the scrapie negotiated rulemaking advisory committee.

Douglas L. Hendrix (301) 436-7251

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USDA PROPOSES TO CLARIFY VETERINARY BIOLOGICS REGULATIONS

WASHINGTON, April 19—The U.S. Department of Agriculture today announced a proposal to clarify regulations regarding certain veterinary biologics. The proposed clarifications would specify the data that applicants need to submit to USDA'S Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service to use autogenous biologics in certain situations.

Autogenous biologics—disease organisms that are taken from sick or dead animals, inactivated and injected into healthy animals for disease protection—are normally used in the herd or flock from which they were isolated. To use autogenous biologics outside the herd of origin requires special permission from the APHIS administrator. The proposed regulations clarify the information needed to apply for special permission.

The proposed data requirements differ depending on whether or not the animals being inoculated with the autogenous biologic are adjacent to the herd of animals from which the biologic was taken.

The proposed regulations also would clarify the conditions under which the APHIS administrator could authorize the preparation of autogenous biologics from microorganisms older than 12 months—the time limit for using a culture to prepare autogenous biologics.

Under the Virus-Serum-Toxin Act of 1913, APHIS is responsible for ensuring that all veterinary biologics are pure, safe, potent and effective.

These proposed regulations will be published in the April 23 Federal Register. Comments on the proposal will be accepted if are received on or before June 22. An original and three copies of written comments referring to docket number 89-200 should be sent to Chief, Regulatory Analysis and Development, PPD, APHIS, USDA, Room 866, Federal Building, 6505 Belcrest Road, Hyattsville, Md., 20782.

Comments may be inspected at USDA, Rm. 1141-S., 14th Street and Independence Avenue, S.W., Washington, D.C., between 8 a.m. and 4:30 p.m., Monday through Friday, except holidays.

Anita K. Brown (301) 436-5931

#

TINY WASPS SAVE ALFALFA PRODUCERS \$88 MILLION ANNUALLY

WASHINGTON—Biological control—achieving pest control by using the pest's natural enemies—works, and just one such project saves farmers \$88 million per year, the U.S. Department of Agriculture reports.

“Cattle love alfalfa, but bugs seem to like it even better,” said James W. Glosser, administrator of USDA's Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service. “To keep alfalfa weevils from taking the lion's share of the crop, farmers in the United States used to apply chemical pesticides to alfalfa fields at a cost of up to a billion dollars per year.

“Fortunately, several decades ago, USDA's Agricultural Research Service tested six imported species of stingless wasps for their ability to keep alfalfa weevils in check. They found that the tiny wasps ignore other insects but single out the alfalfa weevil as a host for depositing their eggs. When the wasp eggs hatch, the weevil is literally eaten alive by the wasp larvae,” Glosser said.

“After ARS researchers proved the value of spreading parasitic wasps to control the alfalfa weevil, APHIS took on the job of establishing the beneficial wasps across the land. Between 1980 and 1989, APHIS and its cooperators raised and distributed about 17 million of the wasps, which also spread naturally. Today there are beneficial wasps within reach of virtually every alfalfa field in the country.”

Glosser says APHIS contracted with economists at the University of Massachusetts to analyze data from the alfalfa weevil control project and fit it into a computer model. Results showed that currently the value of the work done by the beneficial wasps is \$88 million per year. Overall, this means that society gets back about \$87 for each dollar spent on the APHIS project.

“Since biocontrol works so well, we want to help everyone involved make the best possible use of present and potential beneficial agents. I am excited at the prospect of saving even more money on pest control while, at the same time, we lessen our dependence on chemicals that may have a harmful effect on the environment. Our efforts in biocontrol are a

concrete example of USDA's commitment to protect our natural resources and advance the environmental values that Earth Day has come to symbolize," Glosser said.

Amichai Heppner (301) 436-5222

Issued: April 19, 1990

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USDA ANNOUNCES PREVAILING WORLD MARKET PRICE FOR UPLAND COTTON

WASHINGTON, April 19—Under Secretary of Agriculture Richard T. Crowder today announced the prevailing world market price, adjusted to U.S. quality and location (adjusted world price), for Strict Low Middling (SLM) 1-1/16 inch (micronaire 3.5-4.9) upland cotton (base quality) and the coarse count adjustment in effect from 12:01 a.m. Friday, April 20, through midnight Thursday, April 26.

Since the adjusted world price (AWP) is above the 1988 and 1989 crop base quality loan rates of 51.80 and 50.00 cents per pound, respectively, the loan repayment rates for the 1988 and 1989 crops of upland cotton during this period are equal to the respective loan rates for the specific quality and location.

The AWP will continue to be used to determine the value of upland cotton that is obtained in exchange for commodity certificates. Because the AWP in effect is above the established loan rate, loan deficiency payments are not available for 1989-crop upland cotton sold during this period.

This period represents Week 1 of the six-week transition period from using current shipment prices to using forward shipment prices in the Northern Europe price component of the AWP calculation. For Week 1 and Week 2, the Northern Europe price = $(2 \times \text{Northern Europe current price}) + (\text{Northern Europe forward price})^3$. This procedure was adopted to avoid a dramatic change in the AWP that could occur at the end of the marketing year with no transition period, due to differences between new and old crop price quotes.

Because both current shipment prices and forward shipment prices for "coarse count" cotton C.I.F. northern Europe are not yet available, the Northern Europe coarse count price this week will equal the 5-day average of the 3 lowest-priced current shipment prices for "coarse

count’’ cotton C.I.F. northern Europe for the preceding Friday through Thursday. The six week transition period for the Northern Europe coarse count price component of the AWP will begin whenever both the Northern Europe coarse count current price and the Northern Europe coarse count forward price become available.

In calculating the adjustment to average U.S. spot market location, Thursday’s current shipment prices for U.S. Memphis territory and the California/Arizona territory as quoted for Middling 1-3/32 inch cotton C.I.F. northern Europe were used.

Based on data for the week ending April 19, the AWP for upland cotton and the coarse count adjustment are determined as follows:

Adjusted World Price	
Northern Europe Price	80.68
Adjustments:	
Average U.S. spot market location	13.15
SLM 1-1/16 inch cotton	2.20
Average U.S. location	0.39
Sum of Adjustments	<u>-15.74</u>
ADJUSTED WORLD PRICE	64.94 cents/lb.
Coarse Count Adjustment	
Northern Europe Price	80.68
Northern Europe Coarse Count Price	<u>-77.31</u>
	3.37
Adjustment to SLM 1-inch cotton	<u>-4.75</u>
	-1.38
COARSE COUNT ADJUSTMENT	0 cents/lb.

The next AWP and coarse count adjustment announcement will be made on Thursday, April 26.

Charles Cunningham (202) 447-7954

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PUERTO RICAN FIRM RECALLS TWO CANNED TURKEY PRODUCTS

WASHINGTON, April 19—The Federal Packing Company, Inc., of Carolina, Puerto Rico, is voluntarily recalling all production lots of two canned turkey products because food spoilage organisms have been found in one of the products, according to a U.S. Department of Agriculture official. In addition, the company also reports the isolation of the bacterium *Clostridium botulinum* in samples of its products tested by a private laboratory.

The products are packed in 50-ounce cans and are labeled either “Canned Boned Turkey in Bouillon,” “Canned Boned Turkey in Broth,” or “Canned Boned Turkey with Natural Juices Diced Fully Cooked.” The establishment number P-6694 appears inside the inspection seal on the label, and the wording “Packed for AJM Meat Packing, Inc.” appears on the bottom of the label.

These products were produced for the Puerto Rico Department of Education and were distributed to public and private schools, churches, charitable organizations, and the Head Start program in Puerto Rico. The products are not officially distributed in U.S. locations outside of Puerto Rico.

“There are reports of seven unconfirmed illnesses that may have been associated with consumption of the canned boned turkey in bouillon,” said Dr. Ronald J. Prucha, associate administrator of USDA’s Food Safety and Inspection Service. “Schools, Head Start facilities, churches and charitable institutions that may have received these products should check their inventory. If they find either of these products, they should contact the distribution warehouse which supplied them. The product should not be eaten or tasted.”

The food spoilage organisms were discovered when FSIS tested the canned boned turkey in bouillon. The firm has notified the Puerto Rico Department of Education of the findings, and as a precaution is including all of its production of both items in the recall.

The Puerto Rico Department of Education is notifying all of its schools to return the products. No other product made by the firm is involved in this recall. FSIS is working with the company to ensure that any future production is safe and wholesome.

Consumers with questions about the recall may phone the toll-free USDA Meat and Poultry Hotline at 1-800-535-4555. The hotline can be

reached from 10 a.m. to 4 p.m. Eastern time Monday through Friday. If callers from Puerto Rico are unable to use the toll-free number, they may call 1-202-447-3333. Callers in the Washington, D.C., metropolitan area should call 447-3333. Both phone numbers provide access to a telecommunications device for the deaf.

FSIS inspects all meat and poultry sold in interstate commerce to ensure that it safe, wholesome and accurately labeled.

Jim Greene (202) 447-4026

#

USDA ANNOUNCES CHANGE IN 1990 HONEY-LOAN REPAYMENT LEVEL

WASHINGTON, April 19—Keith Bjerke, executive vice president of the U.S Department of Agriculture’s Commodity Credit Corporation, today announced this week’s honey-loan repayment levels.

The new weekly honey-loan repayment level for 1990-crop honey is 38.0 cents per pound for all colors, table and nontable grades, effective at 12:01 a.m. April 20, 1990.

The rates for 1989-crop honey are unchanged, as follows:

Weekly Honey-loan Repayment Levels, color and class, cents per pound, 1989 crop Table

White	40.0
Extra-light Amber	37.0
Light Amber	36.0
Amber	35.0
Nontable	33.0

Producers who redeem their honey pledged as loan collateral by repaying their 1989 or 1990 honey-price support loans at these levels may not repledge the same honey as collateral for another loan.

Contacts: Jane K. Phillips (202) 447-7601 8:00 am-4:30 pm ESDST
John C. Ryan (202) 447-8207 4:30 pm-5:30 pm ESDST

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COMPUTER MODEL CALCULATES WEED THREAT

WASHINGTON,—A computer model being developed by U.S. Department of Agriculture scientists could help rice farmers decide when, how and whether to fight back when weeds sprout in their crop.

All weeds are not created equal, and a single sprig of barnyardgrass in rice is as much cause for alarm as three bearded sprangletop weeds, according to USDA agronomist Roy J. Smith Jr.

He said the model will calculate the losses these and six other weeds can inflict on rice production with or without herbicides. Smith said the model could someday be put on a disk that farmers could use on personal computers.

“These eight weeds—barnyardgrass, broadleaf signalgrass, bearded sprangletop, eclipta, northern jointvetch, hemp sesbania, red rice and ducksalad—account for about 90 percent of our weed problems in rice,” Smith said.

He and technician Frank Carey III have been working on the model for two years at the Rice Production and Weed Control Research unit operated by USDA’s Agricultural Research Service at Stuttgart, Ark. They hope to have a working model ready this year.

To use the model, a rice farmer would supply information on the type of rice he’s producing and the type and number of weeds in his field. The model then would describe potential rice losses if no action is taken. The model would also offer information on the costs and effectiveness of various herbicides the farmer might use.

“This will help the farmer more accurately assess his problem,” said Smith. “Even a fairly high density of certain weeds might not cause a farmer that much of a problem in terms of lost yields. There may even be some situations where he won’t even want to use herbicides. When he does use herbicides, this model could help him choose them.”

A report on the model appears in the latest issue of “Agricultural Research” magazine, the monthly publication of the Agricultural Research Service.

Sandy Miller Hays (301) 344-4089
Issued: April 20, 1990

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PRIVATE EXPORTERS REPORT SALES ACTIVITY FOR MEXICO AND UNKNOWN DESTINATIONS

WASHINGTON, April 20—Private exporters today reported to the U.S. Department of Agriculture the following activity:

—Export sales of 146,000 metric tons of corn for delivery to Mexico during 1989-90 marketing year; and

—Export sales of 200,000 tons of corn for delivery to unknown destinations during the 1989-90 marketing year.

The marketing year for corn began Sept. 1.

USDA issues both daily and weekly export sales reports to the public. Exporters are required to report to USDA export sales of 100,000 metric tons or more of one commodity, made in one day, to one destination by 3:00 PM eastern time on the next business day following the sale. Export sales of less than these quantities must be reported to USDA on a weekly basis.

Thomas B. McDonald (202) 447-3273

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USDA ACCEPTING APPLICATIONS FOR CERTIFICATION AS NOMINATORS TO EGG BOARD

WASHINGTON, April 23—The U.S. Department of Agriculture today announced that egg producer groups not already USDA-certified as eligible to nominate members and alternates to the American Egg Board must apply to USDA for certification by May 7.

Daniel D. Haley, administrator of USDA's Agricultural Marketing Service, said USDA will seek nominations from all USDA-certified egg producer groups to fill the two-year terms of nine members and their alternates whose terms expire at the end of 1990. Half the board membership is replaced each year. Certified organizations will be mailed information during the summer on how to nominate producers or representatives of producers.

The 18-member board administers producer-sponsored national research and promotion programs designed to strengthen the egg industry's position in the marketplace. The Egg Research and Consumer Information Act authorizes the board and its programs.

Certification information is available from Janice L. Lockard, Poultry Division, AMS, USDA, Rm. 3944-S, P.O. Box 96456, Washington, D.C. 20090-6456; telephone (202) 447-3506.

Clarence Steinberg (202) 447-6179

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CHOLESTEROL-FIGHTING FIBER CUTS FAT, CALORIES IN ICE CREAM

WASHINGTON, Apr. 23—Cholesterol-conscious consumers with a craving for ice cream could soon get a triple bonus from a new U.S. Department of Agriculture product that reduces the fat and calories in America's favorite dessert while fighting blood cholesterol.

“What we have is a new ingredient made from soluble oat fiber,” said George E. Inglett, a chemist with USDA's Agricultural Research Service. “And because we substitute it for most of the saturated fat, it turns ice cream into a low-calorie, low-fat frozen dessert.”

He said the product, dubbed oatrim, can easily be used in a variety of other dairy products and prepared foods, including yogurt, breads, cookies, salad dressing, sour cream and mayonnaise without affecting taste, texture and appearance.

Oatrim is aimed at consumers who want to cut the amount of fat and cholesterol in their diets without cutting out taste, he said. Unlike fat substitutes already on the market, oatrim is a carbohydrate fiber made with natural enzymes. Inglett reported research findings on oatrim today at the 199th national meeting of the American Chemical Society in Boston. He is based at the ARS Northern Regional Research Center in Peoria, Ill.

Six companies have already shown interest in the product. Inglett said further studies will focus on improving the taste and uses of oatrim in a wide range of foods.

A 4-ounce serving of vanilla oatrim frozen dessert has 135 calories, less than 1 gram of fat and 4 milligrams of cholesterol. By comparison, he said, a similar serving of premium vanilla ice cream has 298 calories, 22 grams of fat and 85 mg of cholesterol.

Oatrim contains beta-glucan, one of the active components in lowering blood cholesterol, he said. Tests with 10-day-old chicks at Montana State

University showed an oatrim diet reduced total blood cholesterol 17.8 percent.

The chicks were first fed diets that elevated blood cholesterol, followed by diets with oatrim. According to Rosemary Newman, a professor of foods and nutrition at MSU, the oatrim diet lowered the chicks' low-density lipoproteins, the "bad" cholesterol, 47.4 percent while increasing their high-density lipoproteins, the "good" cholesterol, 17.7 percent.

Two patents are pending on production of the fiber.

In a taste panel test rating flavor intensity, oatrim frozen dessert scored comparably well against premium vanilla ice cream. On a scale of 0 (bland) to 10 (strong), the sweetness of ice cream was given a 7.3 score while oatrim scored 6.6. For vanilla flavoring, ice cream scored 6.5 and oatrim 5.5. Creamy taste was scored 7.6 for ice cream, 4.3 for oatrim.

The 18 panelists were also asked to judge on the same scale the taste of cereal in the ice creams, since oatrim contains 7.8 percent oat fiber. Ice cream rated a 0 score; oatrim scored 0.7.

"Although the panel scores for oatrim were somewhat lower than those for ice cream, some panel members preferred the lighter texture of oatrim to the heavy cream taste of premium ice cream," Inglett said. Once licensed by a company, oatrim may require approval of the Food and Drug Administration for use in food products, he said.

Matt Bosisio (309) 685-4011

#

USDA ANNOUNCES INITIATIVE TO HONOR VOLUNTEER COMMUNITY SERVICE

WASHINGTON, April 23—As part of President Bush's "Points of Light" program, the U.S. Department of Agriculture will begin an initiative to encourage and motivate employees to participate in community-based activities, Secretary of Agriculture Clayton Yeutter announced today.

"Last November, the president instituted a practice of recognizing individuals as exemplars of his commitment to making community service central to the life and work of every American," Yeutter said. "I share the president's belief and I have named five employees as the Department's first 'points of light.' These employees will be honored

today at the White House as part of the celebration of National Volunteer Week. Others will be honored in the months ahead.”

USDA has countless numbers of employees participating in volunteer community service activities, including the Take Pride in America program, the Combined Federal Campaign, Toys for Tots, the blood donor program and working with USDA’s adopted school in Washington, the Van Ness School.

“Our ‘Points of Light’ initiative is intended to build upon ongoing efforts and provide additional motivation and encouragement for USDA employees to give of themselves to their communities. The government cannot solve all of America’s problems. By giving of ourselves, we can make a difference in the lives of many people,” Yeutter said.

The five USDA employees honored today at the White House were:

—Daniel L. Englejohn for his work with AIDS patients and the feeding program for homeless women.

—Marsha Gittinger for her work with community mental health and homeless children.

—Jenny D. Grover for her work as a Spanish language interpreter with the American Red Cross.

—Gwendolyn Leftwich for her work with senior citizens, the homeless and prison inmates.

—Martin A. Patch for his work designing and supervising the construction of a building serving as a community outreach center.

Kelly Shipp (202) 447-4623

#

RITCHKO NAMED ADMINISTRATOR OF USDA’S HUMAN NUTRITION INFORMATION SERVICE

WASHINGTON, April 23—Sue Ann Ritchko today was named administrator of the U.S. Department of Agriculture’s Human Nutrition Information Service.

In announcing the appointment, Secretary of Agriculture Clayton Yeutter said, “Sue Ann’s work in food and nutrition programs and consumer services are an ideal combination of experience for her new role as administrator of HNIS.”

HNIS, which reports to Assistant Secretary for Food and Consumer Services Catherine A. Bertini, measures food consumption and dietary levels of Americans and develops materials to aid the public in meeting dietary needs.

As vice president of consumer services for Price Chopper Supermarkets, based in Schenectady, N.Y., from 1974-1989, Ritchko was responsible for the East Coast chain's food and nutrition programs, customer information and public relations.

The new HNIS administrator worked for the Food and Drug Administration, 1971-74, serving as spokesperson for all food and drug issues in eastern New York.

Ritchko has had extensive local government experience. She served as an elected member of the Albany County legislature from 1979-1983, and was a member of the Board and Deputy Supervisor of the town of Bethlehem, N.Y.

She also served on advisory councils of Cornell University's School of Agriculture and the College of Human Ecology.

Kelly Shipp (202) 447-4623

#

WATER SUPPLY FORECAST IS LOW FOR WESTERN STATES

WASHINGTON, April 23—The water supply forecast for the Western states is low this year, a U.S. Department of Agriculture official said today.

“With snowfall virtually over and snowmelt beginning, it looks like spring and summer streamflows will be below average for most of the West,” said Wilson Scaling, chief of USDA's Soil Conservation Service. “The wise use of water will be more important than ever.”

Spring and summer streamflows are forecast to be below 70 percent of average in California, Nevada, Arizona, most of Oregon, Utah and New Mexico, southern Idaho, southwestern Wyoming, and western Colorado.

The only areas in the West with streamflow expected to be above average are most streams in southern Alaska, the Cache la Poudre River in Colorado, and the headwaters of the Tongue River in Wyoming and the Kootenai River in Canada and Montana.

Reservoir storage on the last day of March was near to slightly above average for most of the Western states. New Mexico was the only state with well above average reservoir storage. Nevada, Arizona and California reported below to well-below average storage figures.

The Western states depend on snowmelt for about 75 percent of their water supply. SCS and the National Oceanographic and Atmospheric Administration's National Weather Service jointly analyze snow and precipitation data and forecast seasonal runoff.

State-by-state outlooks:

ALASKA—With a record snowpack across the southern half of the state, heavy snowcover poses serious flood threats for ice-jam flooding along major rivers. The situation has eased somewhat over the past week. Most of the streamflow is expected to be above to well-above average. The Koyukuk River, however, is forecast to produce below-average flows.

ARIZONA—Surface water supplies will be limited as streamflow and reservoir storage decline. The water from the Central Arizona Project will help relieve some shortages. Runoff within Arizona has been very low and forecasts do not call for any improvement. The snowpack has melted dramatically. March moisture was below average. Reservoir storage is low except on the Colorado River.

CALIFORNIA—As the rainy season comes to an end, it is virtually certain that the state will suffer a fourth consecutive year of drought. Seasonal precipitation is about 60 percent of average. The Sierra snowpack water content began to decline in March, a month ahead of schedule. The water content of the snowpack in the San Joaquin drainages is slightly less than 50 percent of the April 1 average. Snow water contents in the Sacramento and Tulare Lake Basins are about 35 percent of the April 1 average. As a whole, expected streamflow volumes for the 1990 water year should be about 40 percent of average, with the driest areas continuing to be the central coast and Tulare Lake Basins.

COLORADO—Much of the state continues to face below-normal water supplies for the summer of 1990. The most critical area is the southwest, where water supply projections call for only 25 to 35 percent of average supplies in many basins. Where reservoir storage is nonexistent, or in short supply, water users should make plans for applying all practical water conservation measures. Crop production will depend on adequate spring and summer rainfall throughout much of the state this year.

IDAHO—Streamflow forecasts are well below normal across much of central and southern Idaho, slightly below normal in the east and the Upper Snake Basin and near normal in the north. Early snowmelt could compound the problem, causing streams to recede to low flow conditions much earlier than normal. Water users in central and southern Idaho should keep in touch with their local irrigation districts for more specific information.

MONTANA—Most irrigation reservoirs have near to above-average storage but some in the southwest and central areas have below-average levels. Streams in the northern areas are forecast to have near to a little above-average spring and summer runoff. Percentages drop toward the south with most streams expected at 80 to 90 percent of average runoff.

NEVADA—Reservoirs ranged from well-below average to above average. The Owyhee River Basin had the highest, at 114 percent of average, and the Lower Humboldt River Basin had the lowest, at 29 percent of average. Streamflow forecasts are well below average for all eleven basins of Nevada and the eastern slopes of the Sierra Nevada Mountains. Streamflow forecasts are the highest in the Owyhee River Basin at 56 percent of average and lowest in the Carson River Basin at 34 percent of average.

NEW MEXICO—Water supply conditions decreased in March to the below-average range in the Canadian River Basin and the Sangre de Cristo Mountain tributaries to the Rio Grande. The Zuni Mountains of west central New Mexico and the Mimbres River Basin snowpacks have melted out with little or no runoff produced. The water produced from the snowmelt soaked into the dry soils. Most streamflow forecasts have decreased from last month. Severe shortages of snowmelt runoff water for irrigation are expected over much of the state.

OREGON—Some water shortages can be expected in the eastern part of the state this spring and summer while adequate supplies will be available in the Mt. Hood area and the Willamette Valley. The mountain snowpack is much below average throughout most of the state. March precipitation amounts were generally 50 to 75 percent of the normal amounts. Reservoir storage is 89 percent of normal.

UTAH—Prospects for adequate streamflow this spring and summer are poor, with forecasts averaging only 55 percent of average. Reservoir storage is still 10 percent below average. Only heavy and properly timed spring and summer rains can offset shortages faced by water users in Utah.

WASHINGTON—The snowpack decreased slightly in March and varied from 48 percent of normal in the Stemilt Basin to 124 percent in the Skykomish Basin. Reservoir storage is good, with reservoirs in the Yakima Basin at 97 percent and most of the rest showing over 100 percent of average. Runoff forecasts vary from 103 percent of average in the Chelan River to 62 percent on Mill Creek in the Walla Walla Basin. Streamflows in March varied from 67 percent of normal on the Snake River to 126 percent on the Walla Walla River.

WYOMING—Streamflow prospects improved in the southeast part of the state during the month. This includes the Upper North Platte above Seminoe Reservoir and the Laramie River drainages. Drainages in the Big Horn Mountains and in the Black Hills will have runoff that is near average. Streamflows are forecast to be much below average during the spring and summer in the central part of the state and along the southwestern border. Storage in major reservoirs brightened except for the North Platte River drainage, the Green River Basin and in the Black Hills. Precipitation continues to be below average for most of the state.

Diana Morse (202) 447-4772

#

PRIVATE EXPORTERS REPORT SALES ACTIVITY FOR USSR AND MEXICO

WASHINGTON, April 23—Private exporters today reported to the U.S. Department of Agriculture the following activity:

—Export sales of 100,000 metric tons of hard red winter wheat for delivery to the USSR during the 1989-90 marketing year and under the seventh year of the Long Term Grain Supply Agreement signed Aug. 25, 1983 and extended Nov. 28, 1988; and

—Export sales of 120,000 tons of corn for delivery to Mexico during 1989-90.

The marketing year for wheat began June 1 and for corn began Sept. 1.

Sales of wheat and corn to the USSR for delivery during the seventh year of the agreement (which began Oct. 1, 1989 and ends Sept. 30, 1990) total 16,322,100 tons, of which wheat is 3,205,200 tons and corn is 13,116,900 tons. Sales of soybeans total 343,400 tons and soybean meal total 1,198,000 tons. In addition, sales of barley total 7,300 tons.

USDA issues both daily and weekly export sales reports to the public. Exporters are required to report to USDA export sales of 100,000 metric tons or more of one commodity, made in one day, to one destination by 3:00 PM eastern time on the next business day following the sale. Export sales of less than these quantities must be reported to USDA on a weekly basis.

Thomas B. McDonald (202) 447-3273

#

LOS ANGELES STORE OWNER SENTENCED TO PRISON AND RESTITUTION OF \$1,600,000

WASHINGTON, April 24—A Los Angeles grocery store owner was sentenced late yesterday in U.S. District Court after he pled guilty to charges of illegally acquiring and redeeming \$1.6 million in U.S. Department of Agriculture food stamps.

USDA's Deputy Inspector General Leon Snead said Jose N. Gonzalez, 55, owner of Grocery & Cafe Rene, was sentenced to 46 months in prison, and three years probation. In addition, Gonzalez is to pay a \$1,000,000 fine and make restitution of \$1,652,960.

Gonzalez pled guilty on July 18, 1989, to all counts of a 13-count indictment charging him with conspiracy and unlawful acquisition, possession, and redemption of food stamps.

Betty Jo Nelsen, administrator of USDA's Food and Nutrition Service, the agency which administers the Food Stamp Program said, "The stiff sentence imposed in this case sends a strong signal that the government will not tolerate such crimes and will pursue the strongest penalties available to protect the integrity of the Food Stamp Program."

An OIG investigation disclosed that Gonzalez and his employee, Maria Fidelia-Rios Velasquez, 44, Los Angeles, would purchase food stamps from recipients for about half the value and subsequently redeem them for face value. Over a twenty-month period, Gonzalez redeemed \$1.6 million in food stamps.

"The investigation began with a tip from an informant. OIG special agents working undercover made contact with Gonzalez and Velasquez, who purchased \$4,680 in food stamps for \$2,530 in cash. The investigation culminated with the arrest of Velasquez at the grocery store," said Snead.

Following the arrest, OIG special agents searched the store and found 538 food stamp identification documents used by recipients to obtain food stamps; 115 Social Security cards; and 18 California driver's licenses. The investigation disclosed that Gonzalez lent recipients cash and held their identification documents as collateral. On the date that the recipients received their monthly food stamp allotments, Gonzalez would accept food stamps in payment for the loans and purchase the recipient's remaining food stamps for approximately one-half the value.

Velasquez pled guilty to conspiracy and unlawful acquisition of food stamps and was sentenced to 18 months in prison, and two years probation. The court also ordered she is equally responsible for the restitution of \$1,652,960.

Both defendants are presently fugitives and are being sought by law enforcement officials.

David Dickson (202) 447-6701

#

CONSUMERS LIKE NEW NAME FOR LEAN MEAT

WASHINGTON—Consumers who eat leaner beef must be happy because there is a lot more of it on grocery shelves, said a marketing analyst with the U.S. Department of Agriculture.

“Much of the increase has happened since USDA replaced the 60-year-old ‘USDA Good’ label with the new ‘USDA Select’ quality grade standard two years ago, according to Dr. Jimmy Wise, of USDA’s Agricultural Marketing Service.

Since USDA responded to consumer and industry group petitions for the name change in November 1987, the amount of officially graded leaner beef has increased by more than 700 percent.

“Consumers told us they wanted a more positive description of leaner meat available in grocery stores, and they got it,” said Wise.

Nutrition-conscious consumers who wanted the name change maintained that the “Good” label misled buyers into thinking meat was mediocre. When the “Good” grade was first established in the 1920’s, it described the amount of fat or marbling in a cut of meat. Nowadays, less fat is considered by nutritionists to be more healthy, and leaner meat is better for you than just plain “Good” sounds, consumers told USDA.

Wise said the name change was important because it was a cooperative effort to change standards and was supported by consumer, health and industry groups, as well as the federal government. In June 1986, the consumer group, Public Voice for Food and Health Policy, petitioned USDA to change the standard name from "Good" to "Select." The change was supported by 12 other consumer-health organizations, including the American Cancer Society, the American Heart Association, the Center for Science in the Public Interest, and the Consumer Protection Federation of America.

In response, USDA published a proposal to rename the "Good" grade. The proposal also was supported widely by the beef cattle and packing industries, including the American Meat Institute, the National Cattlemen's Association and the American Farm Bureau Federation.

"Select came about because of welcome coalition between industry and consumers," said Wise. "Select is selling, and that wouldn't be happening if people weren't happy with it. Industry is responding by providing more leaner beef for grading, and more retailers are beginning to carry the product."

In the three months prior to the official name change, only 49,714 pounds, or 1.7 percent of all graded beef, was graded "Good." By the final quarter of 1989, the "Select" label accounted for 433,413 pounds, or 14.3 percent of all graded beef, according to statistics kept by the Agricultural Marketing Service.

Since the 1920's, USDA has applied quality grades and standards to eight grades that span the range of beef quality—Prime, Choice, Good (now Select), Standard, Commercial, Utility, Cutter and Canner.

Packers voluntarily request USDA's grading services, which helps to assure the industry and consumers of uniform standards for a variety of other commodities including cotton, dairy products, fruits, other livestock, mohair, poultry, rabbits, shell eggs, tobacco, vegetables and wool. USDA grading services are paid for with user fees.

USDA is observing National Consumers Week April 22-28.

Jacque Lee (202) 447-8998
Issued: April 24, 1990

#

USDA COMPUTERS AIM TO GET THE JUMP ON GRASSHOPPERS

Washington—Specialists with the U.S. Department of Agriculture are developing a computer-based decision support system software package for management of grasshoppers on rangeland.

Jerry Fowler, director of the Grasshopper Integrated Pest Management (GHIPM) project coordinated by USDA's Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service, said that the decision support system, referred to as "Hopper," was initiated to develop and deliver management options to land managers and pest control personnel for control of rangeland grasshoppers.

"Range management has evolved into a complex business requiring the accumulation and integration of knowledge from a variety of sources including insect management studies, control programs and range condition assessments," Fowler said. "However, range managers rarely have all the necessary information close at hand to make grasshopper management decisions. 'Hopper' gives them a means to evaluate the possibilities."

Research by Jim Berry and Bill Kemp of USDA's Agriculture Research Service Rangeland Insect Laboratory, Bozeman, Mont., integrates an expert system, database, computer modeling, linear programming and a userfriendly interface into a powerful and flexible decision management tool. And it works on a standard personal computer.

According to Jim Berry there are several design considerations incorporated into this software package. "Many of the potential users have had very little experience with computers. In fact, some of the users may have an initial reluctance to use a computer-based system. Therefore, the system is primarily menu-driven, responds quickly, and requires little knowledge about computers to evaluate a variety of management options."

The present version (Hopper 2.2) is undergoing testing and evaluation by APHIS and ARS personnel, state and county extension agents, agricultural consultants and ranchers. This version facilitates grasshopper population predictions, timing and selection of control options, range condition assessments, weather data compilations and analysis of the economics of range management practices.

"Land managers in the field are an extremely important source of information that can be used to improve the present version," Berry said.

“We plan a general release of this software system to both public and private land managers by mid-1991.”

GHIPM project director Fowler explains, “There is a growing awareness among ranchers and land managers that pest-control activities should be selected and scheduled to maximize effectiveness and minimize environmental disturbance. Of the potential insect pests, grasshoppers are by far the most serious that land managers and ranchers face on rangeland.”

The GHIPM project is a cooperative effort of federal, state and private institutions, organized to develop management and control methods for grasshoppers infesting rangelands. The integrated approach uses a carefully selected combination of proven control techniques that are suited for each particular situation.

Douglas L. Hendrix (208) 334-9320

Issued: April 24, 1990

#

USDA PATENTING METHOD TO AID LACTOSE INTOLERANT CONSUMERS

WASHINGTON—U.S. Department of Agriculture scientists are patenting a more efficient way to break down lactose, a sugar in milk that 70 percent of the American adult population can't digest.

An enzyme produced by the body normally breaks down lactose in dairy products, but African-Americans, Asiatics and native Americans tend to have a low level of this enzyme, said George Somkuti of USDA's Agricultural Research Service. Lactose intolerance also tends to increase in adults.

This technique could allow those people to enjoy dairy products and is expected to boost the dairy industry's market by increasing sales volume.

“We are offering a new source for this enzyme,” Somkuti said. “This source is better than those now being used as additives because of its food-grade nature.”

The new source is an altered form of the bacterium *Streptococcus thermophilus*, which produces an enzyme that breaks down lactose in dairy products, Somkuti said. *S. thermophilus* is approved by the Food and Drug Administration as a natural agent to make products like cheeses and yogurt.

The benefit of this altered bacterium is that it won't grow when added to milk. However, it splits lactose into two simple sugars, glucose and alactose, Somkuti said.

The altered bacterium also speeds up the action of the starter culture now used to ferment the simple sugars, resulting in more rapid growth and a shortened manufacturing schedule.

First, the altered bacterium is subjected to mild treatments that weaken the cell wall, exposing the lactose-degrading enzyme. The treated bacterium can be added directly to milk before fermentation, Somkuti said.

The altered culture doesn't ferment lactose like the parent culture because the system that transports lactose is shut down, he said. The parent culture breaks down lactose and produces lactic acid, which sours milk, Somkuti said. The altered bacterium cannot grow and no acid is produced.

Currently, enzymes produced by yeasts or fungi are commercially used to reduce the lactose content of milk. However, these enzymes must be extracted from the microorganism before being added to dairy products, he said. Isolating enzymes from yeast and fungi is costly and labor-intensive for companies making lactose-reduced dairy products, making them expensive.

However, the altered cultures of *S. thermophilus* can be added directly to dairy products without having to first isolate the enzyme from the bacteria. This can be done because of the food-grade status of this bacterium, Somkuti said, adding that the process should reduce production costs.

Another advantage of the altered strain of *S. thermophilus* is its ability to tolerate heat, Somkuti said. Lactose-degrading enzymes from yeast often can't withstand high temperatures used under industrial conditions.

The altered microorganism could be added to milk before pasteurization, Somkuti said. Pasteurization is the heating of milk to kill food-poisoning bacteria.

Research at the Eastern Regional Research Center's Milk Components Utilization Unit in Philadelphia showed that the enzyme remains active at 131 degrees Fahrenheit, which is close to pasteurization temperature, he added.

"The yeast enzyme is destroyed at a relatively low temperature," Somkuti said. "The altered *S. thermophilus* strain has a better chance of surviving the pasteurization step."

By adding the altered strain prior to pasteurization, the enzyme gets a head start on breaking down lactose, compared with enzymes from yeast or fungi that are added after pasteurization, he said. This may be important because it should speed up fermentation of dairy products by regular starter cultures.

April 22-28 is National Consumers' Week. USDA is addressing consumer issues that include food safety, nutrition, new food technologies, and how agriculture affects the environment.

Bruce Kinzel (301) 344-2739

Issued: April 25, 1990

#

USDA LAUNCHES INFO CAMPAIGN FOR PEOPLE ESPECIALLY VULNERABLE TO FOODBORNE ILLNESS

WASHINGTON, April 23—People who face special risks from foodborne illness—the very young, the very old and the chronically ill—are the focus of a new safe food handling campaign being launched by the U.S. Department of Agriculture during National Consumers Week (April 22-28).

“Consumers Week is a great opportunity to alert people to USDA’s ongoing consumer programs as well as special initiatives providing information to groups at risk,” said Dr. Lester M. Crawford, administrator of USDA’s Food Safety and Inspection Service.

According to Crawford, people who are very young, elderly, or chronically ill are more likely to become sick from foodborne bacteria because their immune systems are either weakened or not fully developed. “While a foodborne illness may just be an annoyance for most of us, for a person with weakened immunity, it can lead to serious health problems,” Crawford said.

USDA’s Consumer Advisor Ann Chadwick said USDA is particularly concerned about these vulnerable consumers. “But all consumers should know that controlling microbiological contamination of food is everybody’s responsibility,” she said. “Safe food handling only begins with farmers. It must be continued by food processors and retailers, enforced at the commercial level by government, and practiced by consumers from the time food is bought until it is eaten.”

To help prevent foodborne illness, FSIS' new initiative will focus on providing educational information to organizations and groups representing people who are at risk. These materials will detail why these groups are at risk and how foodborne illness can be prevented at home and when eating out. USDA officials will also exhibit safe food handling information at a number of professional conferences targeted to groups at risk.

According to Crawford, people with AIDS are the single fastest growing group facing special risks from foodborne bacteria. The elderly, with more than 35 million people in their ranks, are the largest group at risk and are increasing in number.

The initiative will also target pregnant women, because any illness they contract may affect their unborn children. (For instance, a rare but emerging foodborne organism in some processed meats and unpasteurized dairy products has been found to cause abortions and stillbirths.)

"Children under one year of age are also especially vulnerable to some foodborne bacteria, because their immune systems are immature," said Crawford.

People with chronic illnesses who may be especially vulnerable include some cancer patients, especially those receiving chemotherapy, diabetics and some patients with chronic liver and kidney diseases.

For anybody with a weakened immune system, the possible health consequences of foodborne illness can be serious and can lead to kidney failure, meningitis, and even death.

According to Crawford, an estimated 6.5 million Americans suffer from foodborne illness every year, generally characterized by symptoms such as diarrhea, upset stomach, nausea and vomiting. USDA surveys show that many of these illnesses are caused by improper handling of food in the home.

"All meat and poultry are thoroughly checked by federal inspectors before they earn the USDA seal of inspection, but these foods aren't sterile. Consumers need to follow safe food handling guidelines which can greatly reduce their risk of illness," Crawford said.

According to Crawford, there are three key rules to safe food handling:

- Never eat raw or undercooked meat, poultry, seafood or eggs. These foods can contain harmful bacteria.

- Wash hands, utensils, cutting boards and counters that have come into contact with these foods. Foodborne bacteria can contaminate anything they touch.

—Cook raw foods thoroughly (to an internal temperature of 160 degrees F) in order to kill any bacteria that might be present. Meat and poultry should be cooked so there is no pink color inside and juices run clear. Eggs should be cooked until solid, not runny, and fish should flake with a fork.

Consumers with questions about safe handling of meat and poultry can call the USDA Meat and Poultry Hotline at 1-800-525-4555, 10-4 weekdays, Eastern time. (Washington, D.C., area callers should dial 447-3333.)

USDA's Food Safety and Inspection Service has been conducting consumer education programs promoting safe handling of meat and poultry since 1973. The agency's 9,600 employees are dedicated to ensuring safe, wholesome and accurately labeled meat and poultry.

Jim Greene (202) 382-0314

#

ADRENAL GLAND CHEMICAL MAY HELP EXPLAIN COSTLY SHIPPING DISEASE

WASHINGTON—An excess of a chemical from cattle's adrenal glands may be a key ingredient in a common livestock ailment known as shipping fever, according to a U.S. Department of Agriculture scientist.

Shipping fever, actually bacterial pneumonia, is a most common cause of respiratory disease in calves and adult cows. Cattle grow poorly, need more time and feed to reach market weight, and can suffer lung damage or die.

Easily spread, it is often seen in cattle that have been shipped long distances to feedlots, shows or fairs, or assembled in sales barns, said USDA's Brian J. Hughes.

Hughes, an immuno-toxicologist with USDA's Agricultural Research Service, said the prolonged stress of shipping or unfamiliar pen-mates can stimulate the release of unusually high amounts of chemicals called glucocorticoids from the animal's adrenal gland.

Glucocorticoids are a natural part of the animal's life and play an important role in its energy balance. They normally are released in brief surges when the animal is momentarily stressed.

But when an animal is stressed over a long time, such as by a combination of stressful events, the glucocorticoid level is high over a

prolonged period, according to Hughes. “It’s like continuously holding a ball up against the ceiling, rather than letting it bounce up and down naturally,” he said.

Hughes said the glucocorticoids attach to receptors on cells throughout the animal’s body.

“We’re trying to prevent the glucocorticoids from attaching and causing problems, he said, “We know that in studies where people have used doses of glucocorticoids, a whole realm of immune responses in the patients have been suppressed.”

Hughes and ARS physiologist Michael T. Zavy hope to use other chemicals to block or mask the receptors before the glucocorticoids become attached. In addition, they have used these same chemicals to control the amount of glucocorticoid being produced by the adrenal gland.

The compounds, known collectively as anti-glucocorticoids, include progestins—female sex hormones—and another synthetic hormone, melengestrol acetate or MGA.

To test these materials, the scientists took cattle from a free-range environment, checked their glucocorticoid levels, and then confined them for two weeks to produce stress. During confinement, the animals were given extra amounts of ACTH, a chemical from the pituitary that prompts the adrenal gland to release glucocorticoids. They also received daily doses of either progesterone or MGA.

At the same time, a control group of cattle was confined and therefore stressed, but received no anti-glucocorticoids. A second control group was neither dosed nor confined. After two weeks, all the cattle were loaded and hauled from the ARS Forage and Livestock Research Laboratory at El Reno, Okla., to Amarillo, Texas, and back, an eight-hour ride.

By checking the animals’ glucocorticoid levels during confinement, before transit and after transit, the scientists found that MGA at low doses is good at dampening, but not completely blocking, the release of glucocorticoids, Hughes said. Such chemicals might someday be given cattle prior to stressful activities such as shipping to block the development of infections like shipping fever.

Sandy Miller Hays (301) 344-4089

Issued: April 24, 1990

#

USDA MEAT AND POULTRY HOTLINE RECEIVES RECORD NUMBER OF CALLS

WASHINGTON, April 25—More than 64,000 persons called the U.S. Department of Agriculture's Meat and Poultry Hotline in fiscal year 1989—a record number, according to the hotline manager. The hotline, a service of USDA's Food Safety and Inspection Service, has been in operation five years.

“The hotline plays an important role in preventing foodborne illness,” said Sue Templin, hotline supervisor. “Many of the situations described by callers present a clear risk of foodborne illness. Examples are: improper thawing, improper cooling and storage of cooked food, and not thoroughly cooking meat and poultry.”

Data collected from the hotline show that consumers today are more sophisticated and informed than in years past. “This may be due to foodrelated news stories,” said Templin.

Although callers expressed a wide variety of questions and concerns, 71 percent of the inquiries involved “basic food safety.”

USDA Consumer Advisor Ann Chadwick said the hotline helps teach consumers that controlling microbiological contamination of food is everybody's responsibility. “Safe food handling only begins with farmers,” she said. “It must be continued by food processors and retailers, enforced at the commercial level by government, and practiced by consumers from the time food is bought until it is eaten.”

Most of the basic food safety questions received by hotline staff concerned handling turkey, chicken, eggs, beef and pork, said Templin. Consumers also asked about freezer and refrigerator storage times and sought information about salmonella. Other inquiries concerned product content, dating and labeling, product recalls, residues of agricultural chemicals, food additives, chemical contaminants, inspection and regulatory aspects of food safety, conditions at stores, packaging, alleged illnesses or injuries from foods, and miscellaneous other topics.

As in previous years, consumers continued to be the predominant users of the hotline service, accounting for 86 percent of the calls. Other callers included business people, the media, government employees, students and teachers, other professionals, citizen interest groups, and legislators.

The holiday season, traditionally the busiest time of year for the hotline, generated 11,500 calls during November, Templin said. To

accommodate the pre-Thanksgiving demand, food safety experts staffed the hotline the weekend before, and from 8:00 a.m. - 2 p.m. on Thanksgiving Day.

Calls during the year were received from all U.S. states, districts and territories. The five leading states, accounting for 40 percent of all calls to the hotline, were New York, California, Illinois, Florida, and Pennsylvania. Fourteen calls were received from foreign countries, including Canada and Great Britain.

Consumers with questions about the safe handling of meat and poultry can call the Meat and Poultry Hotline at 1-800-535-4555, 10 a.m.-4 p.m. weekdays, Eastern Time. (Washington, D.C., area callers should dial 447-3333.)

FSIS conducts a nationwide inspection program, employing 7,000 inspectors, to ensure safe, wholesome and accurately labeled meat and poultry products.

Jim Greene (202) 382-0314

#

NATIONAL GROVE OF STATE TREES ESTABLISHED AT NATIONAL ARBORETUM

WASHINGTON, April 25—The U.S. Department of Agriculture today held groundbreaking ceremonies to establish the National Grove of State Trees at USDA's National Arboretum in Washington, D.C.

Mrs. Jeanne Yeutter, wife of Secretary of Agriculture Clayton Yeutter and proponent of the project, planted the grove's first tree, a six-foot Colorado Blue Spruce, state tree of Colorado.

F. Dale Robertson, chief of USDA's Forest Service, said the grove is jointly sponsored by the Forest Service, USDA's Agricultural Research Service, which oversees the National Arboretum, and the National Association of State Foresters (NASF).

Also at today's ceremonies, an architectural rendering of the grove's design was unveiled. The grove eventually will include state trees from all U.S. states. In the future, trees in the grove will be planted in the chronological order in which the states entered the Union.

Participating with Mrs. Yeutter and Robertson at today's ceremonies were NASF President and Colorado State Forester James Hubbard; Dr. Charles E. Hess, assistant secretary of agriculture for science and

education; Dr. R. Dean Plowman, ARS administrator; Dr. Henry Cathey, director of the USDA's National Arboretum; and Kathy McGlaufflin, director of Project Learning Tree, a private, nonprofit organization of the American Forest Council that promotes conservation education.

Robert Conrad (202) 453-9696

#

USDA MAKES FOURTH INCREASE IN 1989/90 IMPORT QUOTA FOR SUGAR

WASHINGTON, April 25—Secretary of Agriculture Clayton Yeutter today announced that the import quota for sugar is increased by 250,000 metric tons (about 275,580 short tons), from 2,584,865 metric tons, raw value, to 2,834,865 metric tons, raw value. The increase is effective Friday, April 27.

Yeutter said the increase puts quota shipments about 9.5 percent higher than with the previous quota. "Continued supply-demand imbalances necessitated an additional adjustment in the quota above the level established last January," Yeutter said.

The quota was previously increased on Sept. 12 and Nov. 24, 1989, and Jan. 18. The quota period remains unchanged from Jan. 1, 1989 through Sept. 30, 1990.

The total authorized quota shipments of 2,834,865 metric tons is equal to about 3,124,905 short tons, raw value. Total authorized quota shipments are equal to the sum of the specialty sugar quota (1,815 metric tons), the minimum quota allocations, the quota adjustment amount (increased from 163,622 metric tons to 237,712 metric tons) and the base import quota (increased from 2,390,000 metric tons to 2,576,000 metric tons) minus certain adjustments in the base import quota.

Shipping patterns for quota sugar were also announced. There are no shipping pattern restrictions in effect for any country either for the previously announced quota or for the increase of 250,000 metric tons.

The new country-by-country quota allocations were announced today by U.S. Trade Representative Carla Hills. Nicaragua's allocation has been reinstated. The new quota allocations by country are as follows (in metric tons, raw value) for the period Jan. 1, 1989 through Sept. 30, 1990:

Argentina	112,630	Australia	217,401
Barbados	18,336	Belize	28,813
Bolivia	20,955	Brazil	379,798
Canada	28,813	Colombia	62,864
Congo	17,305	Costa Rica	49,758.5
Dominican Republic	460,997	Ecuador	28,813
El Salvador	71,034.1	Fiji	23,490
Gabon	17,305	Guatemala	125,727
Guyana	31,432	Haiti	17,305
Honduras	47,490.4	India	20,955
Cote D'Ivoire	17,305	Jamaica	28,813
Madagascar	17,305	Malawi	26,067
Mauritius	31,390	Mexico	17,305
Mozambique	34,051	Nicaragua	54,328**
Panama	75,024	Papua New Guinea	17,305
Paraguay	17,305	Peru	107,392
Philippines	413,850	St. Kitts and Nevis	17,305
Swaziland	41,908	Taiwan	31,432
Thailand	36,670	Trinidad-Tobago	18,336
Uruguay	17,305	Zimbabwe	31,432

**Nicaragua’s sugar import quota allocation has been reinstated, and includes 50,190 metric tons, raw value, which had previously been embargoed and allocated to other countries.

Kelly Shipp (202) 447-4623

#

FOREST SERVICE HONORS NATIONAL FOREST VOLUNTEERS

WASHINGTON, April 25—In celebration of National Volunteer Week (April 22-28), the U.S. Department of Agriculture’s Forest Service today honored top volunteers in the agency’s first annual Volunteer Award Program.

Forest Service Chief F. Dale Robertson presented the awards at a ceremony here at USDA headquarters. “Volunteers are the heartbeat of the Forest Service,” he said. “We could not get our work done without them.”

In 1989, over 67,000 volunteers took part in Forest Service jobs and projects, contributing over 2,225 person-years worth of work valued at 29 million dollars.

Robertson said the number of volunteers in the Forest Service have increased each year since the inception of the volunteer program in 1973, and that the 1989 figure is a record.

“In the 17 years since the Forest Service volunteer program started, 507,000 volunteers have performed work in the national forests worth more than \$213.5 million,” he said. “This was work that otherwise would have been financed by the taxpayer or would not have been done.”

Volunteers perform a wide variety of work, including trail maintenance, tree planting, improvement of fish and wildlife habitat, publication writing, office assistance, and many other tasks.

The award categories and Forest Service volunteers honored today are:

Individual Volunteer Service—Andrew Gulliford, Museum Director of Western New Mexico University, for educational and interpretive volunteer services and leadership in support of the management activities of the Gila National Forest, New Mexico;

Sponsored Individual Service—Lower Salt River Project, a volunteer partnership with sponsored organizations, groups, and businesses on the Tonto National Forest, Arizona on numerous cleanup projects and the promotion of water safety activities for the past few years;

Forest Service Employee—Terri Jenkins, Forestry Technician, for coordinating the program of over 600 volunteers on the Pisgah Ranger District, North Carolina for the past four years;

Forest Service Unit—Utah’s Uinta National Forest management team whose extensive volunteer program accounts for over 17 percent of the total volunteers in the Forest Service.

Organizations and individuals who want to volunteer may contact their nearest Forest Service office or write: Volunteers in the National Forests, Forest Service—USDA, P.O. Box 96090, Washington, D.C. 20090-6090.

Gordon Meyer (202) 447-2061

#

FOREST SERVICE SET REFORESTATION RECORD IN 1989

WASHINGTON, April 25—The U.S. Department of Agriculture's Forest Service today reported that it reforested a record 492,000 acres on the national forests in its 1989 fiscal year. This acreage far exceeds any of previous years since the creation of the National Forest System in 1905.

Forest Service Chief F. Dale Robertson said that the large amount of tree planting and other reforestation work is due in part to the rehabilitation efforts in areas burned by the major wildfires in California, Oregon, and Washington in 1987, as well as to high levels of reforestation in areas of 1986-1988 timber harvests in the national forests.

Of the total area reforested in FY 1989, about 307,000 acres were directly seeded or planted to trees. The remaining 185,000 acres were reforested through natural regeneration, by seed falling from nearby trees onto areas prepared by the Forest Service, or through sprouting.

The previous Forest Service record was set in 1980, with 434,000 acres reforested. It is anticipated that for fiscal year 1990, 460,400 acres will be reforested.

“As we look to the future there will be a continued emphasis on tree planting programs across the nation on our national forests, other public, and private lands as well,” said Robertson. “President Bush has become an important new partner in forestry. The president has set a goal of planting one billion additional trees a year for the next 10 years. That equals about four trees per American per year.”

Jim Sanders (202) 447-3772

#

PRIVATE EXPORTERS REPORT SALES ACTIVITY FOR UNKNOWN

WASHINGTON, April 25—Private exporters today reported to the U.S. Department of Agriculture export sales of 200,000 metric tons of soybeans for delivery to unknown destinations during the 1990-91 marketing year.

The marketing year for soybeans begins Sept. 1.

USDA issues both daily and weekly export sales reports to the public. Exporters are required to report to USDA export sales of 100,000 metric

tons or more of one commodity, made in one day, to one destination by 3:00 PM, eastern time on the next business day following the sale. Export sales of less than these quantities must be reported to USDA on a weekly basis.

Thomas B. McDonald (202) 447-3273

#

UNITED STATES TO DONATE U.S. AGRICULTURAL COMMODITIES TO NICARAGUA

WASHINGTON, April 25—The United States will donate \$10.8 million worth of U.S. agricultural commodities to Nicaragua, Secretary of Agriculture Clayton Yeutter said today.

Under a Food for Progress agreement, the United States will donate \$5.1 million worth of corn (about 44,000 metric tons), \$1.4 million worth of inedible tallow (about 5,000 tons) and \$4 million worth of vegetable oil (about 6,500 tons).

Under Title II of Public Law 480, the United States is donating 800 tons of wheat flour, 200 tons of vegetable oil and 95 tons of wheat/soy blend. The Title II commodities are valued at \$350,000. Additional Title II donations are currently under consideration. The United States will pay all freight costs under both agreements.

“These donations signify the strong U.S. support for the new democratic government in Nicaragua,” Yeutter said. “We hope these commodities will help alleviate some of the immediate needs of the Nicaraguan agricultural sector.”

The Food for Progress program is intended to support development of free enterprise elements in the agricultural economies of recipient countries. The Title II commodities will be distributed immediately to needy people by private voluntary charitable organizations. The supply period for these donations is fiscal year 1990.

Sally Klusaritz (202) 447-3448

#

UNITED STATES DONATES FEED GRAINS TO JORDAN

Washington, April 25—The United States has donated 155,000 metric tons of U.S. corn and 155,000 metric tons of U.S. sorghum to Jordan, according to F. Paul Dickerson, general sales manager of the U.S. Department of Agriculture's Foreign Agricultural Service.

The corn and sorghum will be sold by the Jordanian government to local feed millers and farmers for livestock feed, Dickerson said. The proceeds will be used to assist humanitarian and developmental activities primarily in the agricultural sector.

“While the United States has traditionally supplied corn to Jordan, this is the second year it has provided sorghum,” Dickerson said. “This donation of corn and sorghum will not only help the people of Jordan, but may help develop a potential market for U.S. sorghum producers as well.”

The donation was made under Section 416(b) of the Agricultural Act of 1949, which authorizes the donation of surplus commodities owned by USDA's Commodity Credit Corporation to needy people overseas.

Sally Klusaritz (202) 447-3448

#

JORDAN ELIGIBLE FOR FROZEN POULTRY UNDER EEP

WASHINGTON, April 25—Under Secretary of Agriculture Richard T. Crowder today announced an opportunity for sales of 6,000 metric tons of U.S. frozen poultry to Jordan under the U.S. Department of Agriculture's Export Enhancement Program.

Sales of frozen poultry will be made to buyers in Jordan at competitive world prices. The export sales will be made through normal commercial channels with the assistance of commodities from the inventory of USDA's Commodity Credit Corporation. This will enable U.S. exporters to compete at commercial prices in the Jordanian market. This is the 107th initiative announced under the EEP.

This allocation will be valid for a one-year period as provided for in the invitation for offers. Details of the program, including an invitation for offers from exporters, will be issued in the near future.

For more information call Alex Bruks, (202) 382-9274, or Don Street, (202) 382-9240. For a tape-recorded message announcing the issuance of invitations under EEP call the CCC Operations Hotline, (202) 447-2042.

Sally Klusaritz (202) 447-3448

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**THIS WEEK’S HONEY-LOAN REPAYMENT LEVELS
UNCHANGED**

WASHINGTON, April 26—Producers may repay their 1989 honey price-support loans at the following levels, according to Keith D. Bjerke, executive vice president of the U.S. Department of Agriculture’s Commodity Credit Corporation:

Weekly Honey-loan Repayment Levels, color and class, cents per pound, 1989 crop Table

White	40.0
Extra-light Amber	37.0
Light Amber	36.0
Amber	35.0
Nontable.....	33.0

The weekly repayment level for 1990-crop honey is 38.0 cents per pound for all colors, table and nontalbe grades.

The levels are unchanged from those announced last week.

Producers who redeem their honey pledged as loan collateral by repaying their 1989 honey-price support loans at these levels may not repledge the same honey as collateral for another loan.

Contacts: Jane K. Phillips (202) 447-7601 8:00 am-4:30 pm EST
John C. Ryan (202) 447-8207 4:30 pm-5:30 pm EST

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